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2011 SAGE AWARD FINALISTS ANNOUNCED

HIGH POINT, N.C. – Crypton Super Fabrics, Leggett & Platt Home Furniture Components and Sauder Woodworking have been named finalists for the 2011 Sage Award. The award recognizes environmental excellence in the home furnishings and bedding industries.

One of the three companies will be named the 2011 winner on Saturday, October 22, at a recognition breakfast held in conjunction with the Opening Day Press Breakfast for the High Point Market in High Point, N.C.

The Sage Awards were launched in 2008 by the American Home Furnishings Alliance (AHFA) and Cargill's BiOH® polyols business unit to seek out and spotlight environmental innovators from whom others in the home furnishings and bedding industries can learn. The competition is open to retail, manufacturing and supplier companies in both the furniture and bedding industries.

The winner receives \$2,500 from Cargill to be donated to the environmental cause or charitable organization of the winner's choice. All three finalists will be featured in a customized video that spotlights their environmental achievements. The videos will be presented February 22 at the 2012 Sustainability Summit in Raleigh, N.C., and will be featured on the Sage Award website (www.SageAward.org) for a year. In addition, all three finalists receive a complimentary registration to the Summit.

Crypton Super Fabrics, based in West Bloomfield, Mich., produces a specially engineered fabric system with an integrated moisture barrier. Unlike applied fabric protection coatings, Crypton's environmentally friendly, patented process is engineered into the fabric, encapsulating every fiber. The company's manufacturing facility in Kings Mountain, N.C., leverages best practices and manufacturing technologies to consume less water and energy, emit less pollution and reduce the use of packaging materials. Judges also scored the company high on its efforts to extend its best practices throughout the textile industry by supporting the development of the Sustainability Assessment for Commercial Furnishings Fabric. This fall, Crypton is focusing on its residential products with the launch of "Crypton at Home."

Leggett & Platt Home Furniture Components, based in Carthage, Mo., has been producing furniture components for over 125 years and sells its engineered components to over 1,500 furniture makers worldwide. All 13 of the company's Home Furniture Components facilities in six states are implementing

AHFA's EFEC environmental management system, and three of the largest have achieved registration. Since beginning the efforts in 2008, the 13 facilities have realized significant reductions in energy and water use, and have reduced raw material, waste and packaging use. Packaging innovations alone reduced tons of corrugated waste and saved tens of thousands of dollars. The company's efforts at its No-Sag facility in Kendallville, Indiana, earned the plant a Governor's Award for Environmental Excellence this year.

The third finalist, **Sauder Woodworking**, was founded in 1934 by Erie Sauder, who began the company in a barn behind his Archbold, Ohio, home. Originally building custom cabinets and church pews, he eventually added small tables that he crafted from the "leftovers." With his focus on efficiency, he introduced a new concept in 1951 – a snap-together table that could be shipped in a flat-pack box, and the ready-to-assemble furniture industry was born. Long before "sustainability" was a global concern, Sauder's reuse of scrap material and efficient, RTA shipping was setting a standard for sustainable business practices. Since 2010 alone, the company has invested over \$2 million in processes to recover and reuse wood waste; \$1.5 million to convert lighting in over 4 million square feet of manufacturing space; and \$1.7 million in a system to optimize air flow and reduce energy use.

The three Sage Award finalists were selected by a diverse panel of eight judges representing furniture and bedding industry leaders, environmental journalists, sustainability experts and the furniture industry business press. They included **Sharron Bradley**, executive director of the Western Home Furnishings Association (WHFA), a division of the National Home Furnishings Association; sustainability expert **Heather Gadonniex**, who this year joined Underwriters Laboratories (UL) as the organization's new Environmental Product Declaration program manager; and **Leslie Guevarra**, an associate editor for Greener World Media who has more than 20 years of news experience, including work at the San Francisco Chronicle, where she was a deputy managing editor. Greener World Media is an online publishing group focused on sustainable business.

Also **Jessica Kellner**, editor-in-chief of *Natural Home Magazine*, an authority on sustainable home design and materials, earth-friendly décor and natural lifestyles; **Jean Nayar**, former editor-in-chief of Woman's Day Special Interest Magazines and author of "Green Living by Design;" **Ryan Trainer**, president of the International Sleep Products Association; **Powell Slaughter**, editor at *Home Furnishings Business*; and **Steve Walker**, assistant director of the Furniture Manufacturing and Management Center at North Carolina State University.

No one from AHFA nor Cargill participates in the Sage Award judging. Results were tabulated by Ken Smith, managing partner of Smith Leonard, a High Point-based accounting firm. The entries were evaluated based on each company's sustainability efforts, social or community involvement and their business success.

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The American Home Furnishings Alliance, based in High Point, N.C., represents more than 200 leading furniture manufacturers and distributors, plus about 150 suppliers to the furniture industry worldwide. More information on the Sage Award can be found at www.SageAward.org.

Cargill is an international provider of food, agricultural and risk management products and services. Its BiOH® brand polyols were the first commercially successful bio-based industrial polyols used in flexible foams. Derived from natural vegetable oils such as soybean oil, BiOH polyols help flexible polyurethane manufacturers reduce their environmental footprint and market their choice to downstream customers.